

VZCZCXRO3319  
RR RUEHBC RUEHDE RUEHDH RUEHKUK RUEHROV  
DE RUEHAM #1637/01 2031034  
ZNY SSSSS ZZH  
R 221034Z JUL 09  
FM AMEMBASSY AMMAN  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 5546  
INFO RUEHEE/ARAB LEAGUE COLLECTIVE

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 AMMAN 001637

SIPDIS  
NOFORN

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/19/2019  
TAGS: [PHUM](#) [PGOV](#) [KINR](#) [JO](#)  
SUBJECT: RUMORS CIRCULATE ABOUT LAWSUIT AGAINST JORDAN'S  
FORMER INTELLIGENCE CHIEF

REF: AMMAN 1423

Classified By: Ambassador R. Stephen Beecroft  
for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (S/NF) Summary: A London-based website often used to circulate rumors and gossip in the Arab world reported on July 13 that former General Intelligence Directorate (GID) chief Mohammed Dahabi was or will be questioned in connection with a lawsuit filed by a former MP, Ahmed Oweid Al-Abaddi. That lawsuit is likely being pursued as revenge by Abbadi, an avid conspiracy theorist who was jailed for slander when Dahabi was the head of GID. Contacts dismissed the news as character assassination by Dahabi's political enemies. End Summary.

#### Investigation of the Former GID Chief

-----

¶2. (S/NF) Ilaf.com, a Saudi owned, London-based site known to circulate rumors and other unofficial disclosures from the Arab world, published a story on July 13 that former General Intelligence Director Mohammed Dahabi (brother to current Prime Minister Nader Dahabi) has been or will be questioned by intelligence officials as part of an investigation into charges of divulging state secrets. While there is no evidence to suggest that Dahabi was or will be questioned, he is named in a complaint brought by a former MP that is currently being investigated by the courts. The public prosecutor has reportedly dismissed the complaint against Dahabi due to lack of evidence, yet the Ilaf article notes that the internal investigative unit within GID is now required to look into the case.

#### Dahabi's Accuser

-----

¶3. (S/NF) The story is connected to public charges leveled against Dahabi by Ahmed Oweid Al-Abbadi, a former MP who was released from prison earlier this year after serving a two year sentence for slander and heading an illegal political party. Abbadi sued Mohammed Dahabi after the GID chief was forced out, probably with the intention of seeking revenge for his own imprisonment. Abbadi continues to believe that the case against him was politically motivated and engineered by Dahabi himself.

¶4. (SBU) Abbadi has recurring legal problems of his own. After he was released from jail, Abbadi was charged with slander for allegedly suggesting on his website that former Interior Minister Eid Al-Fayez gave Queen Rania USD 350 and a plot of land for her birthday. If convicted, he could be sent back to jail for one year. Abbadi denies the charges, claiming that hackers infiltrated his website and placed the story there on purpose to defame him. The case is still under deliberation in the Jordanian courts.

#### Reaction

-----

¶5. (C) Influential Al-Ghad columnist Abu Rumman, a close contact of Mohammed Dahabi's, discounted the importance of Abbadi's charges and the rumor about the former GID chief being questioned. As for the Ilaf article, Abu Rumman attempted to draw a connection between the site and former Royal Court Chief (and political rival to Mohammed Dahabi) Bassem Awadallah. According to Abu Rumman, 'Amir Al-Hantuli, the journalist who wrote the article, is a close confidant of Awadallah's and has been used in the past to spread malicious rumors against Mohammed Dahabi. Other contacts agreed with Abu Rumman that Abbadi's legal crusade against Dahabi would eventually come to nothing, either because his brother the Prime Minister would protect him or because the charges seem to be baseless in fact.

¶6. (SBU) Ammonnews, a Jordanian website known for unsourced rumors, reported on July 20 that PM Dahabi called the regional manager of Al-Arabiya when the story about his brother appeared as a "flash" on the station's news crawl. The PM reportedly asked Al-Arabiya to remove the story from its crawl as it was "unworthy."

Comment  
-----

¶7. (S/NF) Regardless of the truth behind the Ilaf article, its appearance is hardly surprising. Mohammed Dahabi remains a controversial figure in Jordanian politics. As with any Jordanian politician who has yielded power and influence, Dahabi faces an ongoing stream of rumors which attempt to undercut or bolster his political profile. Innuendo is often

AMMAN 00001637 002 OF 002

used in obscure ways to influence government appointments in Jordan. Unsourced allegations of corruption, rumors of a pending divorce, or even hints of a lucrative private sector job are frequently used by Jordanian politicians and media figures to cast an ongoing shadow over the careers of current and former officials.  
Beecroft